

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Memorial Day
- Operation Recognition Recipient, Kenneth Jordan
- Kansas Veterans' Home Updates
- Kansas Soldiers' Home Updates

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Memorial Day 2014



WaKeeney Veterans' Cemetery

WaKeeney - The Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at WaKeeney held its annual Memorial Day Service on May 26 at 10:00 a.m. It was another beautiful Memorial Day as Reverend Randy Gibbs played the bagpipes during the prelude and over 500 people gathered at the cemetery. The service began with an "assembly call" by bugler, Mick Bollig, as the American Legion Riders paraded into the Cemetery. Several people in the crowd, including the American Legion Riders, volunteered to create a human avenue of flags. The WaKeeney VFW Post 3449 posted the colors as the Hays High Plains Barbershop Chapter Chorus, directed by Don Urban and Bill Scott, sang the National Anthem. Father Charles Steier offered the invocation and Heidi Goff, Cemetery Manager, welcomed all those attending. Retired Colonel Michael Neer, Chairman of the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs, spoke about

the importance of remembering those who sacrificed everything for our freedoms before participating in family activities and barbecues. WaKeeney VFW Auxiliary members, Linda Pfeifer and Marcella Baumgartner, placed wreaths at the base of the United States flag, as the Barbershop Chorus sang a touching song called "It is Well with My Soul." Three American Legion Riders released memorial balloons honoring the 81 Kansas soldiers who have given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan, while Rev. Randy Gibbs played "Amazing Grace" on the bagpipes. A four-man Cavalry re-enactment troop slowly walked behind Garden 4, with an empty saddled horse with boots placed in the stirrups backwards, as a tribute to our fallen soldiers. Immediately following, the Barbershop Chorus sang "Irish Blessing" as a meditation song.

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Memorial Day 2014 - Continued

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Chairman Mike Neer,
WaKeeney Veterans'
Cemetery



Riderless Horse at WaKeeney Veterans' Cemetery

Chris Goble then read the names of the veterans that had their final resting place at the WaKeeney Veterans' Cemetery this past year. The WaKeeney VFW Post 3449 did the three-volley salute, followed by Mick Bollig and Kregg Howell playing echo taps. Mick Bollig also sang the words to Taps. Larry Henderson read a moving original poem, "Hero's Veins", and then sang "50,000 names", remembering the names engraved on the Veterans Memorial Wall. Heidi Goff gave the closing remarks and Fr. Charles Steier gave the benediction. Coffee and Donuts were offered to all those attending. We would like to thank everyone who attended and participated in this Memorial Day Service.



Executive Director Gregg
Burden, Fort Dodge
Veterans'
Cemetery

Fort Dodge - The Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Fort Dodge held its annual Memorial Day service on May 26 at 11:00 a.m. Fort Dodge had approximately 400 people in attendance. The weather was warm as the service began, with the American Legion Riders parading the cemetery, US Flags flowing from the back of their motorcycles. The Riders then lined up behind the flag poles holding flags throughout the service. The Kansas Army National Guard posted colors as Allissa Sandvik sang the National Anthem. Reverend Vernon Bogart offered the invocation, followed by Gregg Burden, Executive Director of the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs, giving a welcome and introduction of the speaker. Army veteran, Wayne Purinton, spoke about his experiences in Vietnam and his participation in the rebuilding of the Vietnam Project. Allissa Sandvik then sang "Amazing Grace" as a veteran placed a wreath honoring the tomb of the unknowns and all of our fallen heroes. US Marine Sergeant Wells and Tonya Sanchez released 81 balloons containing the names of the soldiers in Kansas who have been killed in Iraq or Afghanistan. US Marine Gunnery Sergeant Hastings then read roll call of those veterans who have been buried at the cemetery over the past year. Dodge City VFW Post 1714 gave the three-volley salute and played Taps. Gregg Burden offered the closing remarks, followed by Chaplain Bogart giving the Benediction. Immediately following the service, everyone was invited to a reception in the Administrative Building provided by Fort Dodge catering, Fort Dodge American Legion Auxiliary, and Tonya Sanchez. The staff at Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Fort Dodge would like to thank all those who attended and participated in this year's service.

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Memorial Day 2014-Continued



Ft. Riley Veterans' Cemetery, Bagpipes (left); Laying of wreath (right)



Fort Riley - Memorial Day dawned with overcast skies and a slight breeze ruffling the avenue of flags at the Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Fort Riley. As the crowds gathered and were directed to their parking places by volunteers from the Combat Veterans Motorcycle group, they were treated to some patriotic music provided by the 1st Infantry Division Band. To open the ceremony, the Junction City

Unit Ministry Team. CSM (RET) Ian Mann shared his insights as the guest speaker on the sacrifices of those who have gone before, with musical performances before and after by the Charades Quartet and IID Band. After CSM (Ret) John C. White Jr. placed wreaths in honor of the Tomb of the Unknowns and all Veterans, bagpipers from the Kansas Territorial Pipes and Drums played a moving rendition of Amazing Grace. The ceremony ended with the firing of volleys and taps by the Kansas National Guard Honor Platoon, and the retiring of the colors. At the conclusion of the ceremony, families and friends visited grave sites and enjoyed refreshments in the hospitality room. The words of one attendee provided the perfect summary for this event; *"The whole ceremony warmed our hearts and helped us all."*

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 || **"The whole**
 || **ceremony**
 || **warmed our**
 || **hearts and**
 || **helped us all."**
 || **-Attendee**
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High JROTC presented the colors while the Manhattan Charades Quartet rendered an inspiring version of the Star Spangled Banner. The invocation and benediction were offered by Chaplain Shepherd from the Fort Riley

Winfield - Memorial Day Services were conducted on Monday, May 26, 2014, at the Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Winfield, with approximately 400 persons in attendance.



KCVA Vice Chairman Winfield Veterans' Cemetery

Jim Buterbaugh served as the Master of Ceremony. Speaker, Col. Robert A. Law III, US Army, gave a heartfelt and well-received address. The Memorial Balloon Release was performed by Petty Officer Jeremy Booth, US Navy, and Boy Scout Troop #318. Placing of the Wreaths was conducted by representatives of the American Legion Post 10, VFW Post 3544, Cowley County Sheriff's Department, Winfield Fire Dept. and Winfield Police Dept. Music was provided for the ceremony by the Winfield Community Band and Military honors by American Legion Post 10 and VFW Post 3544, with Taps played by Dr. Gail Burden. Winfield Post 10 American Legion Riders provided their colorful flag line surrounding the ceremony site.



Operation Recognition Recipient

The Salina Journal-

Diplomas are usually awarded in alphabetical order, but Salina Central High School made an exception this year with the oldest graduate stepping to the front of the line.

Senior Tanner Robl introduced Kenneth Jordan, who received an honorary diploma.

Jordan grew up in Salina, and in 1947, used a fake birth certificate to enlist in the U.S. Army at age 14 after being turned down by the Marines two years earlier.

His age was discovered and he was discharged at 16. At 18, he re-enlisted, serving in Korea and Vietnam, among other places, and earned two combat infantry badges, a Bronze star and a Purple Heart during his 25 year army career.

He went on to a career in law enforcement, serving as a sheriff's deputy and state trooper in California, and then working for the U.S. Postal Service.

Now retired and living in Arizona, Jordan wore the same maroon cap and gown as the rest of the class of 2014. He sat with the class



on the floor of the Bicentennial Center, strode up to receive his diploma, then paused and held it high to one of the day's loudest cheers from the crowd.



Kansas Veterans' Home

14th Annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony

Winfield – On April 24, 2014, the Kansas Veterans' Home celebrated the work of volunteers at the facility. Over the last twelve months, 109 volunteers at the Home donated over 2,700 hours of service, performance or skill to residents.

The Home holds a recognition ceremony each April during National Volunteer Week. Most of the volunteers recognized visit the Home for a special event or come in on a semi-regular basis. KVH sets time aside to thank each individual and group spending time helping the facility fulfill its mission to take care of veterans and their loved ones.



The top honors this year went to American Legion Auxiliary Representative to KVH Dorothy Malone. Also in the group of volunteers with over-100 hours logged were VFW Auxiliary Representative to KVH Donna Miller, VFW Chaplain Lloyd Miller, VFW Auxiliary Deputy Representative Valmarie Wood, and Aly Rush from Winfield High School.

Many opportunities to volunteer at KVH are available. For more information on how to support the Home, please contact Activities Director Nancy Mayberry, 620-221-9479, ext. 164.

Moving Towards Paperless

The year 2014 started with the Kansas Veterans' Home moving to electronic health records and away from paper charts. With the adoption of PointClickCare software, changes to resident information are now instantly available to all staff at the Home, making sure resident care is always based on the current situation, even when staff are at opposite ends of the facility.

In support of this move, KVH has updated several work stations and moved to Point-Of-Care entry on tablets in all residential areas.

The move has already streamlined financial operations and is proving to be much more efficient than the old paper charts and files.

Kansas Veterans' Home - Continued

Telemedicine at KVH

The Kansas Veterans' Home has become the second out of 145 state veterans' homes in the nation to offer telemedicine options to its residents as they work with the VA.

Via digital link, residents are able to conduct sessions with their physician or nurse at the Wichita VA. This saves residents the hours of travel and inconvenience of conducting these recurring appointments in Wichita by allowing them to use a conference room at KVH to hold the meeting.

Additionally, this will allow residents to keep appointments with these medical professionals despite restrictions based on weather that often limit transportation between Winfield and Wichita.

Initially, KVH is focusing on regular individual counseling sessions for telemedicine, but is working to expand to other kinds of appointments and group therapy sessions in the near future.

Construction and Triplett Hall

The Kansas Veterans' Home campus is busy this summer with expansion of resident services into Triplett Hall, and construction projects throughout the facility including reroofing portions of Donlon Hall and all of Funston Hall, creation of a delivery/loading dock at Timmerman Hall, and renovation of the dining room at Bleckley Hall.

During his visit early this year, Governor Brownback voiced his support for opening the first floor of Triplett Hall, and as the budget was debated in legislature, the move secured the support of the House and Senate as well. Reactivating this area for resident care will provide 40 more beds in nursing home care for veterans needing that level of assistance. Since consolidating nursing home operations to Bleckley Hall in 2009, the facility has stayed at near-capacity census.

Roofing projects at Funston and Donlon Hall are already underway and should be done soon. The dock at Timmerman will allow easier handling of the many supplies and equipment used in the five-building facility complex.

The renovation of the central area at Bleckley Hall is greatly anticipated. Changes should allow for better flow of dietary services, more flexibility in breakfast services, and a new area for residents to get together from all over the facility. Work on this project started in late June.



Kansas Soldiers' Home

Fort Dodge Remembers D-Day



WWII Veterans at KSH

On June 10, Fort Dodge hosted a remembrance ceremony in honor of the 70th Anniversary of D-Day and our current World War II Veterans. Over 50 people attended, including six WWII Vets. George Turnbull, Dale Mott, and Walter Page, all WWII Veterans, shared their feelings and experiences of what it was like serving during this troubling time in US history, showing us why this group was called the greatest generation. As this generation of Veterans ages, it becomes more important to recognize the significance of what these men and women did, not only for our country, but for the rest of the world!



Kansas Soldiers' Home - Continued

USO Puppet Tour Visits Ft. Dodge

On May 15, the USO Puppet Tour made a stop in Fort Dodge. The USO Tour is a 40-minute program based on Bob Hope's USO Tours to the troops. Before the program, they took time to honor each veteran individually and thank them for their sacrifices. The show itself featured songs, radio skits, and television program segments and commercials from the 1940's including Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, Chattanooga Choo Choo, Thanks for the Memories, and many others. From the sounds of laughter echoing throughout the room during the comedy bits, to singing along with songs many haven't heard in years, the program was enjoyable for those of any age!



VA Updates

Monthly Site Inspections Initiated

WASHINGTON – Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs Sloan D. Gibson today directed all Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Medical Center and Health Care System Directors to conduct monthly in-person reviews of scheduling practices in every clinic within their jurisdiction. Site inspections will include observing daily scheduling processes and interacting with scheduling staff to ensure all policies are being followed to deliver Veterans the timely care they have earned.

"Our top priority is getting Veterans off of wait lists and into clinics," said Acting Secretary Gibson. "We need our folks in the facilities to work directly with staff, answer all questions, and ensure our Veterans receive the timely care they have earned. Veterans must trust their health care system, and these reviews are an important step towards restoring integrity in all our scheduling activities."

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VA Updates - Continued

Monthly Site Inspections Initiated - Continued

In addition to monthly reviews of over 900 Veterans Health Administration facilities nationwide, Veterans Integrated Service Network Directors will also conduct similar visits to at least one medical center within their area of responsibility every 30 days, completing visits to all medical centers in their network every 90 days.

This action follows the VA's release of results from its nationwide Access Audit, along with facility-level patient access data.



Robert J. Dole VA Medical Center; picture from va.gov

Upcoming Events

Kansas Veterans' Home

July

- 11 - Firecracker Friday Luncheon
- 27 - Kansas Kountry Kloggers performance

August

- Winfield VFW Hamburger Cookout (no date yet)
- Triplett Hall Grand Opening (no date yet)

September

- Carp Camp Performance (No date yet)

Kansas Soldiers' Home

July

- 2 - Vietnam Vets "Welcome Home" Banquet
- 3 - July 4 Celebration
- 4 - World of Outlaws STP Sprint Car Series
- 5 - World of Outlaws STP Sprint Car Series
- 26 - 54th Annual Dodge City Days
- 27 - Dodge City Days Concert Featuring Thompson Square
- 29 - Salute Our Troops Event in the Park
- 30 - Annual Chuckwagon Breakfast
- 30 - Dodge City PRCA Rodeo

August

- 1 - Dodge City PRCA Rodeo



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From left: John Ryan, Commissioner; Joy Moser, Commissioner; Jim Buterbaugh, Vice-Chairman; and Michael Neer, Chairman.

The Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs would like to thank our Commissioners for their years of service and dedication to the Agency and to all Kansas Veterans.